

Message Text

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15
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 FEA-01 AGRE-00 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07

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CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01

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P R 221042Z OCT 76
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6830
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
USDEL MTN GENEVA
USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD UK JA
SUBJECT: JAPANESE INDUSTRIALISTS VISIT UK

REF: LONDON 16496

1. A HIGH LEVEL GROUP OF JAPANESE INDUSTRIALISTS
VISITED LONDON OCTOBER 11-12 AT THE INVITATION OF THE
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CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRIES TO DISCUSS TRADE

PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE UK MESSAGE FROM BOTH GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY WAS STRAIGHT AND SIMPLE: JAPAN MUST OPEN UP ITS HOME MARKETS IF IT WANTS TO KEEP EXPORTING A SUBSTANTIAL VOLUME TO THE UK. THE KEIDANREN TEAM GAVE SYMPATHETIC ASSURANCES THEY WOULD STUDY THE PROBLEM CAREFULLY AND LEFT TOWN IN A BLAZE OF HEADLINES SUCH AS "JAPANESE PROMISE MOVES TO HELP BRITISH TRADE." HOWEVER, THE FINE PRINT ASSESSMENT BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IS THAT IT REMAINS VERY MUCH AN OPEN QUESTION WHETHER THERE WILL BE ANY GENUINELY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS.

2. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BELIEVE THEY CLEARLY SUCCEEDED WITH ONE PART OF THEIR MESSAGE EVEN BEFORE THE JAPANESE INDUSTRIALISTS ARRIVED. WE UNDERSTAND KEIDANREN PRESIDENT DOKO'S FIRST WORDS TO THE UK TRADE SECRETARY WERE "I AGREE WITH EVERYTHING YOU HAVE BEEN SAYING RECENTLY ABOUT YOUR TRADE PROBLEMS WITH JAPAN." WE ARE TOLD DOKO ACCEPTED UK VIEW THAT THE SIZE OF THE TRADE GAP (364 MILLION POUNDS IN 1975), THE WAY BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS ARE CONDUCTED (JAPANESE NTB'S ETC.), AND LOW UK SALES IN JAPAN ARE PROBLEMS THAT NEED TO BE SOLVED. IN FACT WE UNDERSTAND JAPANESE SIDE DID NOT EVEN RAISE THE USUAL DEFENSE OF THE UK INVISIBLE TRADE LARGELY COMPENSATING FOR THE DEFICIT WITH JAPAN ON MERCHANDISE ACCOUNT. THE DELEGATION ALSO MET WITH PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN AND CHANCELLOR HEALEY.

3. THE UK GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO BE ADOPTING A HOPEFUL WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE AT THIS POINT. OFFICIALS ARE EXPECTING THAT AT THE REMAINING EUROPEAN STOPS ON THE JAPANESE ITINERARY A MESSAGE SIMILAR TO THE UK MESSAGE WILL BE GIVEN. TRADE SECRETARY EDMUND DELL HAS ALREADY SCHEDULED A TRIP TO JAPAN IN THE SPRING TO SEE WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION.

4. EMBASSY DOES NOT YET HAVE A READ OUT FROM A NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED WITH THE JAPANESE VISIT. WE WILL DO A FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF UK-JAPANESE TRADE PROBLEMS SHORTLY, PERHAPS WHEN SIR PETER THORNTON RETURNS FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JAPANESE TRIP NOTED REFTEL.
SPIERS

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